



Table of Contents

1	Your Girl Scout Gold Award
1	Standards of Excellence
1	Benefits of Earning the Girl Scout Gold Award
2	Steps to Earning the Girl Scout Gold Award
2	Go on a Senior/Ambassador Journey
4	Frequently Asked Questions
4	Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Training
4	Planning and Budgeting Tips
4	Frequently Asked Questions on Ways to Fund a Project
6	Gold Award Committee Mentors
7	Adult Support Team
7	Suggestions for Writing a Gold Award Project Proposal
8	Gold Award Take Action Project Guidelines
9	Council Gold Award Take Action Project Approval Process
10	Gold Award Take Action Project Hours and Binder Guidelines
12	From Good to Great: Successful Gold Award Projects
13	Gold Award Take Action Project Planning Checklist
14	Sample Gold Award Take Action Project Timeline
16	Sample Gold Award Take Action Project Budget
17	Quotes from Gold Award Recipients
17	Procedure to request Letters of Solicitation of Materials
19	Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal Form
28	Gold Award Take Action Final Report Form

Your Girl Scout Gold Award

This resource was created to help a girl understand what to expect before she decides to submit a Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal. It contains information on the project proposal approval process, important deadlines, budgeting tips, sample forms and more.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest and most prestigious award that Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors can earn. Fulfilling the requirements for the Girl Scout Gold Award starts with completion of two Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador Journeys OR completing one Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador Journey and earning the Girl Scout Silver Award. Each Journey you complete gives you the skills you need to plan and implement your Take Action project.

After you have fulfilled the Journey(s) requirement, 80 hours is the minimum hours for the Gold Award Take Action Project which includes: identifying an issue, investigating it thoroughly, getting help and building a team, creating a plan, presenting your plan, gathering feedback, taking action, and educating and inspiring others.

Standards of Excellence

When you decide to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, you are on your honor to uphold the Standards of Excellence. These standards set a high benchmark for everything you do and invite you to think deeply, explore opportunities, and challenge yourself. Following the Standards of Excellence challenges you to develop yourself as a leader, achieve the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes and make a mark on your community that creates a lasting impact on the lives of others.

Benefits of Earning the Girl Scout Gold Award

- The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award for girls in Girl Scouting. A national award with national standards, it represents the time, leadership, creativity, and effort girls contribute to making their communities better.
- A young woman who has earned the Girl Scout Gold Award has become a community leader. Her accomplishments reflect leadership and citizenship skills that set her apart.
- An increasing number of colleges and universities have recognized the achievement and leadership abilities of Girl Scout Gold Award recipients by establishing scholarship programs for them. Although Girl Scouts of the USA does not award scholarships to Girl Scout Gold Award recipients, GSUSA does publish scholarships for Girl Scouts at www.gsusa.org.
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania awards several GSEP Scholarships each year, many of which give preference to Gold Award recipients. Applications will be posted in November on the web site at www.gsep.org. Deadline to apply is January 15th of each year.

- Many government and community organizations acknowledge the achievements of Girl Scout Gold Award recipients. Check out the Scholarship and Award Guide on the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania's web site for a list of local, state and national scholarships and grants.
- Girls who have earned the Girl Scout Gold Award often enter the four branches of the United States Armed Services at an advanced level and salary, having been recognized for their level of leadership shown in earning the Girl Scout Gold Award.
- The Girl Scout Gold Award projects themselves solve community issues and improve lives.
- The Girl Scout Gold Award process creates assets for the community and the future.
- The Girl Scout Gold Award is the only award earned while in high school that you will be able to include on job applications or resumes following college graduation and for the rest of your life.

Steps to Earning the Girl Scout Gold Award

For award details visit http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/insignia/highest_awards/index.html.

1. Go on a Senior/Ambassador Journey
2. Attend Gold Award Take Action Training. Training is highly recommended, but not mandatory.
3. Choose an issue
4. Investigate
5. Get help
6. Create a plan
7. Present your plan and get feedback
8. Take action
9. Educate and inspire

Go on a Senior/Ambassador Journey

The first requirement for earning the Girl Scout Gold Award is completing one or two Senior and or Ambassador Journeys. This important step helps you build the skills you need to take on your award project and understand how to show leadership through discover, connect, and take action keys.

You must earn all of the awards that are part of that Journey: Girl Scout Visionary Award for *Girldtopia*, Girl Scout Harvest Award for *Sow What*, The Power of Advocacy Award for *Your Voice, Your World*, Sage Award for *Justice*, Sisterhood Award for *Mission: Sisterhood* or Dreammaker Award for *Bliss: Live It! Give It!* This includes creating and carrying out a Take Action project. There are two options for the award pre-requisites:

1. If you have earned your Silver Award complete 1 Journey at either the Senior or Ambassador level.
2. If you have not earned your Silver Award complete 2 Journeys at the Senior or Ambassador level.

The following questions must be answered relative to your Journey Book as part of the Gold Award Project Proposal Form:

Girl Scout Senior Journeys

It's Your World – Change It! Girtopia

1. Create It! What unique vision and artistic representation did you create and share?
2. Guide It! What mini-discussion or group activity did you lead?
3. Change It! Describe your take action project that moved the world or your community closer to ideal.

It's Your Planet – Love It! Sow What

1. What food or land issue were you able to identify for your leader print?
2. What goal did you create that would benefit both the planet and the people?
3. How did you create change by influencing a food policy or land-use effort?

It's Your Story – Tell It! Mission: Sisterhood

1. What did you discover that you value most about friendship?
2. What sisterhood issue did you define that you could take action on and what did you do?
3. How will you carry the message of leadership for sisterhood forward?

Girl Scout Ambassador Journeys

It's Your World – Change It! Your Voice, Your World

1. What was the cause you found that you want to advocate?
1. What was the workable and realistic solution that you proposed?
2. What did you learn by advocating for your chosen issue?

It's Your Planet – Love It! Justice

1. What did you find that matters the most to you about the environment?
1. What was your equation for achieving justice?
2. Who was included in your audience when you made your Sage presentation and what did you ask them to do?

It's Your Story – Tell It! Bliss: Live It! Give It!

1. Who were the three women you interviewed for step 1 of the Dream Maker Award? What dream is each one living or working toward?
2. Who did you help to recognize her dream? How did you help her move toward her dream?
3. What is your own dream for the future?

In order to begin working on a Senior Journey, you must be in 9th grade. If you are working on your Silver Award, it must be completed and approved before starting any work towards the Gold Award, including the prerequisite.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why are Journeys prerequisites to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award?

A: The Journeys give girls a full experience of what they will do as they work to earn the highest award. The skills girls gain while working on the Journeys will help them develop, plan and implement their 80-hour Gold Award Take Action project.

Q: What makes the awards' guidelines different from the Journeys?

A: In contrast to Journey Take Action projects, which give girls themes on which to base their Journey Take Action project, the Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action projects have no pre-designed theme. Girls select their own theme, design, and execute their Take Action project.

Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Training

After you have completed the Journey(s), you are eligible to register for the online Gold Award Take Action training. The E-Learning training is the first part of the two-part training. When you complete the online training, you may register for the two-hour Gold Award Take Action training. While the trainings are not mandatory, they are highly recommended. For training dates and locations, visit our web site at www.gsep.org/ForGirls/BronzeSilverandGoldAwards.

Planning and Budgeting Tips

It's budget time! Start by figuring out what you need and where you can get it for little or no cost, if possible. If it's not possible, think about how much it is going to cost and how you can cover those expenses. Many projects are possible when you concentrate on the issue at hand. Use your influence and leadership skills to come up with ways that you can make a difference that might not include earning money.

Does your plan sound doable? If not, take a step back and refocus. Try to find a different angle to pursue. Work with your troop/group volunteer, project advisor, and Take Action Volunteer Team to find solutions to problems and obstacles that come up along the way. Creating a budget for your Girl Scout Gold Award project can seem like a difficult task. But once you break it down into smaller steps, the process becomes quite simple.

If you wish to seek donations of materials/supplies for your Take Action Project, please use the Letter of Solicitation of Materials/Supplies found on page 18.

See Sample Gold Award Take Action Budget Worksheet on page 17.

Frequently Asked Questions on Ways to Fund a Project

Q: Can I use my own money on the Girl Scout Gold Award Project?

A: Yes. If you want to use your own money, you can. You may receive help from your family, too. However, we encourage you to work with others to earn the money. That's part of the process. "Going for the Gold" is not meant to be a hardship on a family or individual. When designing your project, it's important to think creatively about how you can make a difference with little or no money. Then talk to your Council and advisor about ideas for financing the project or arranging for the donation of materials and services.

Some individual money-earning projects with great potential:

1. Pet walking and pet care
2. Babysitting
3. Lawn mowing
4. Plant sitting
5. Recycling
6. Tutoring younger kids
7. Providing respite care for family caregivers
8. Refereeing sports games
9. Party giving (clowning, magic shows, game leading)
10. Making or repairing jewelry
11. Creating hand-made greeting cards
12. Providing a calligraphy service for addresses on special invitations

Q: Can I ask friends and neighbors for help?

A: You cannot ask for or accept donations of money, but you can ask for donations of time and stuff, such as clothing for a clothing drive or that pile of bricks left over from your neighbor’s backyard project. However, if the neighbor wants to claim the donation as a tax deduction, he or she will need to make the donation to the Council for IRS purposes and get a receipt signed by a Council staff person.

Q: Can my troop conduct a money-earning activity to raise money for my Gold Award project?

A: Yes, your troop can conduct a money-earning activity to raise money for your Gold Award project. If the troop agrees to do this, they have to agree that the profits from the money-earning activity will go toward your Gold Award project. The troop must submit a Money-Earning Activity application to the Service Unit Manager for approval. The money-earning activity cannot be held during any of the council’s product sales (Fall Product Sale and Cookie Sale).

Q: What if what I want to do costs too much?

A: It’s better to succeed with a smaller project that is within your budget than to be unable to complete a larger project because it exceeds your budget. Be realistic about what you can and can’t do. Work with your adult project advisor or troop leader to develop a reasonable budget for your project. If your resources are not sufficient for you to realistically accomplish your goal, then you need to rethink the project. Planning is the key to a good Girl Scout Gold Award Project. You should be prepared with a budget for your project before you meet with the Girl Scout Council Gold Award Committee.

Q: Can I seek donations of materials and supplies from local businesses?

A: Yes, you can solicit donations for project supplies from local businesses. If you want to do that, you need to request the council’s Solicitation of Materials/Supplies letter from Joan Hannahoe. The process to secure the donation letter is included in this resource.

Q: Is it all right to seek help from other organizations when doing my Girl Scout Gold Award.

A: Yes, with some qualifications. Many service organizations have budgets for community projects. You can use their interests (e.g., Lions Club International focus on vision care, while Soroptimists may have a committee on literacy) as leverage to support your project and get volunteers to help you. Do some research on local service organizations. Some businesses give employees time off for community service hours and projects

Q: I know you can't raise money as a Girl Scout for other organizations, but can I do it on my own?

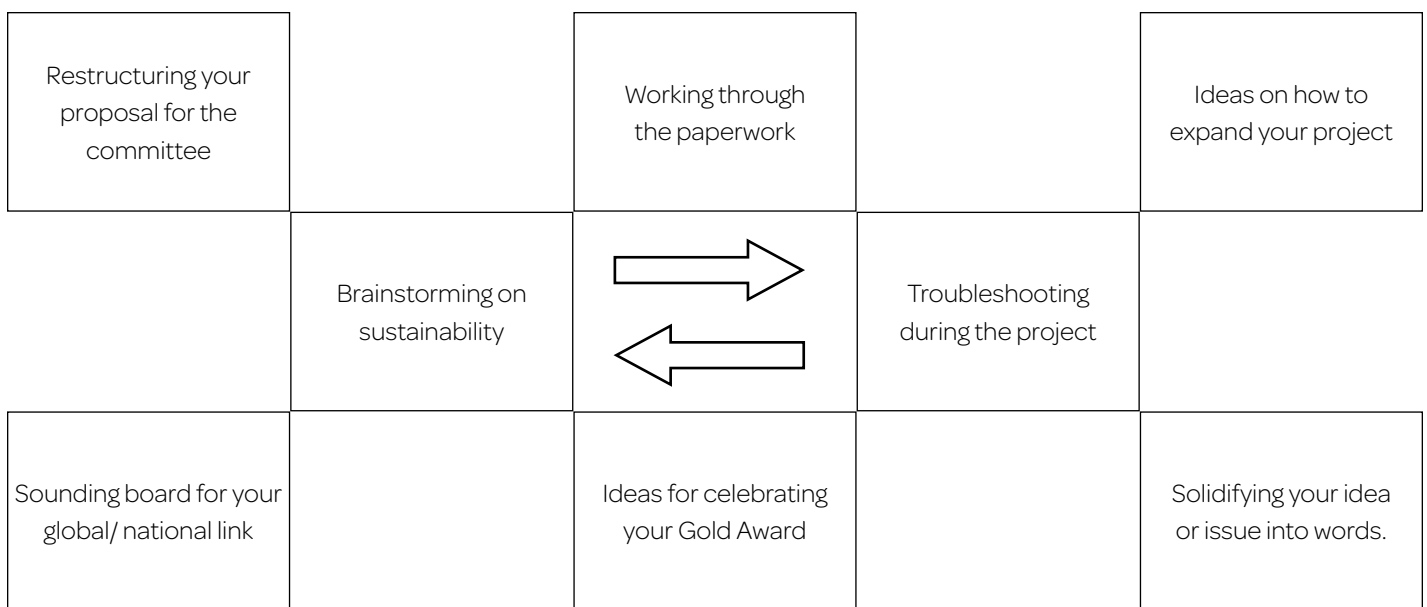
A: As an individual, you can volunteer for other organizations, but you cannot identify work that you do to raise funds for another organization as part of your time going toward the Girl Scout Gold Award. Additionally, you may not present yourself as a Girl Scout to the public in this process since you are a volunteer for another organization. For example: If your local Red Cross needs money to purchase supplies, you may participate under their supervision as an individual volunteer to raise funds, but you cannot count that service as part of your time toward any Girl Scout award or service hours.

Q: Can we charge for a Girl Scout event to earn money?

A: If it is a service project, a fee can be collected to cover the cost of materials. The project ceases to be a service project if you are charging a fee for the event above cost, in which case the hours cannot go toward service hours in any award. If you are doing an event as a Girl Scout (e.g., a Badge Workshop, Bike Rodeo, etc.) and are planning to charge a fee above the cost of materials, you must first clear this with your Girl Scout Council. You must be clear in your advertisements and material that this is a money-earning event for your troop/group.

Gold Award Committee Mentors

Your assigned Gold Award Committee mentor can help you with any of the following:



Adult Support Team

Troop/Group Volunteer

This adult is the leader or advisor of your Girl Scout troop. For Juliettes, this may be a Service Unit Manager or Older Girl Consultant. This person's signature is required on the Project Proposal and Final Report. A relative's signature may not appear anywhere on the Project Proposal.

Project Advisor

This adult is neither your troop leader nor a relative. The project advisor must be a community member who has agreed to advise a girl with specific technical aspects of her project. This adult could be a member of the agency or site who benefits from the girl's project or a professional with specific expertise relevant to the project. For example: A girl might use a landscape architect or owner of a nursery for a landscaping project. The Project Advisor's signature is required on the Project Proposal and Final Report.

Volunteer Team

You may recruit friends, family and peers to help you with your Gold Award Take Action project. You must recruit at least five or more non-related volunteers to serve on your volunteer team. After you train your volunteer team, they will assist you in providing/delivering/teaching the program/service to others in the community.

Gold Award Committee Mentor

This adult is assigned to you by the Gold Award Committee. Approval by your mentor and/or the Gold Award Committee is needed before you begin your 80-hour Take Action Project.

GSEP Older Girl Program Manager

This adult is the GSEP staff member who oversees the Gold Award process. Questions which cannot be addressed by your mentor can be directed to Joan Hannahoe, OGPM, at 610.791.2411, ext. 1509, or at jhannahoe@gsep.org.

GIRL-LED

The Gold Award process, as you know, is girl-led. This means that you are responsible for writing your project proposal, turning in your paperwork, scheduling your interview and final presentation, and contacting the committee with your questions. If your leader, advisor or parent has general questions about the process they may contact the OGPM with those questions. Specific questions related to your project, from approval to implementation, must be asked by you.

Suggestions for Writing a Gold Award Project Proposal

- Remember, the Gold Award Committee knows nothing about your project or the area in which you live.
- Include as many details as possible: who, what, when, where, why, and how. The more details the better, which means fewer questions from the Gold Award Committee.
 - If you are making a physical item: describe the item you are making, how many, who will receive them, who will help you make them, how many sessions are needed, the length of each session, etc.
 - If you are doing a program: how many do you anticipate will attend, what will you do if you don't get the expected number of participants, where will you hold the program, when will you hold the program, how long will each session last, etc.
 - If you are painting a mural, making banners, etc: what size is the mural or banner, how many are you making, what is the topic of your mural/banner (describe it to us), who is the recipient of the banners or where are you painting the mural, did you get permission from the organization to paint the mural or did they agree to receive the banners, when are you painting/making the mural/banners, etc...
- A suggestion would be to give the completed Project Proposal to someone who knows nothing about your project and ask if they have any questions about the project. Incorporate the answers to those questions into your Project Proposal.

Gold Award Take Action Project Guidelines

The Girl Scout Gold Award is a project that develops your leadership skills. It demonstrates that a Girl Scout knows how to learn and/or teach others. It should stretch your abilities, challenge you, and address a unique need in your community. As you research and implement your project, pick something you feel passionate about and try to work with people you have not worked with in the past.

Remember:

- The project must be a minimum of 80 hours.
- The project must meet an expressed community need outside of Girl Scouting.
- The Gold Award is an individual accomplishment. Group projects are not allowed.
- A girl must earn a **minimum of 10 hours** of leadership toward the 80 project hours. Create a leadership component that enables you to grow as a leader. The ten leadership hours are earned by recruiting, training and supervising a team of five or more non-related volunteers who will help a girl deliver/provide/teach the program/service to others in the community. A girl may lead and supervise at the same time in order to attain the leadership component. The Gold Award project is not meant to be a “one person does it all” project.
- The Gold Award Take Action project is not a one-day/time event. The project must contain a minimum of 10 hours of program implementation, which does not include set up or clean up. Time spent training your volunteer team or completing the steps involved in planning the project do not count toward the 10 hours of program implementation.
- The average project takes a minimum of three months to complete. The nature of some projects will require a longer period of time for completion.
- In order for the project to be considered an expressed community, your program, if applicable, must serve a minimum of 10 participants. You must also be able to guarantee an audience.
- Collection projects can only be a small part of a larger project, not a stand alone project. A project involving a collection of items must be expanded to include a minimum 10-15 hour educational/ implementation component as part of the 80 hours.
- Projects cannot be based on established or “blue-print” outreach initiatives (i.e. Pillowcases for ConKerr Cancer, Jared Boxes, Project Linus, etc.). Projects must include original initiatives, designed by the girl.
- Your project goal cannot include earning money for an individual or another organization. However you can create a project that provides a service or fulfills a need for another organization. For example, you could not donate \$100 to the American Cancer Society. However, you could do a breast cancer awareness project, arrange for a mammogram mobile, arrange for publicity for the event, and put a system in place to ensure the mammogram mobile returned year after year. The educational component is one of the key ingredients for a project.
- A girl is strongly encouraged to involve as many people from the community as possible. If done properly, projects under the new guidelines will require a girl to contact and involve more people from the community: go beyond her comfort zone to network and meet people she doesn’t know to be involved in her project.

Keep in mind:

- A service project is done for the community. A Take Action project is done with the community.
- A Gold Award Take Action Project must represent an activity or accomplishment you have not previously accomplished.
- Keep in mind that some community needs will not meet the level of leadership that is expected for the Gold Award. Some community needs are service projects, rather than leadership projects.
- The project should be of personal interest to you. Eighty hours can seem like a very long time if you are not having fun. Be creative. Do not be afraid to try something new.

- The project is not complete until you accomplish your goal as defined in your project proposal.
- The project must be sustainable (have a long term impact).
- Follow all copyright laws, when applicable—no exceptions.
- You cannot raise money for another organization for your Gold Award project; however you can create a project that provides a service or fulfills a need for another organization.
- While the project must be yours, you may consult with others to get suggestions. Many community agencies/groups have “wish lists” of things that they would like to see happen, but can’t due to lack of resources and time.
- Community means different things to different girls. Your project might be done for your local town or township, your church, your school, your county, your state, or even another state or country.

Council Gold Award Take Action Project Approval Process

1. Submit the Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal form, timeline, budget, and Project Advisor Agreement at least **four weeks prior to when you want to begin the project** to: Girl Scouts of Eastern PA, c/o Joan Hannahoe, 2633 Moravian Avenue, Allentown, PA 18103 or email it to jhannahoe@gsep.org. Questions related to the award can be directed toward Joan Hannahoe at 610-791-2411, ext. 1509. Please use the GSEP Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal found at www.gsep.org/ForGirls/BronzeSilverandGoldAwards.
2. Conduct an interview with the Gold Award Committee to discuss your project proposal.
 - The Gold Award Committee meets as follows:
 - The first Monday of the month at Lehigh Valley Service Center
 - The third Tuesday of the month at Chester County Government Service Center in West Chester
 - The fourth Wednesday of the month in Berks County
 - The second Thursday of the month at Shelly Ridge Service Center
 - The above dates will vary during holiday seasons (i.e. July 4th, Labor Day, etc.)
 - You will be assigned a Gold Award mentor, who is a member of the Gold Award Committee. She will support you through your Gold Award Take Action Project. It is your responsibility to communicate the progress of your project to your Gold Award mentor monthly.
 - A girl who wants to earn her Gold Award Project at the end of her senior year of high school must submit her Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal no later than May 1. The Gold Award Take Action project notebook and the paperwork (final report, timeline, public relations form, final budget, list of volunteers, digital headshot of yourself, and 3 digital project photos with you in one photo and your volunteers in another photo) must be submitted no later than July 15. This will give you time to schedule your final presentation with the committee before leaving for college. If you are not planning to attend college the fall after graduation, the deadline to conduct your final presentation will be September 15.

3. Gold Award Proposal Status

Once you have submitted your Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal to the Gold Award Committee, your proposal will be given one of the following status designations:

Approved - The project meets all expectations and may be started upon verbal notification by the Gold Award Committee. Some projects may be “approved with caution” when the committee has included a comment or reminder to ensure a successful project.

Pending Approval – The proposal is sound, but is missing some limited information. The requested information can be submitted to Joan Hannahoe and your Gold Award Committee mentor who will then give final approval to begin the project. These projects do not have to be reviewed again by the committee.

Resubmit to mentor – As written, the project does not meet the standards of a Girl Scout Gold Award Project. The idea itself may be good, but the project is missing a key element. It may not be sufficient in scope to meet the leadership, vision or other criteria of a Gold Award project, or the committee may question the project’s benefit to the community. Projects designated as resubmits have potential, but must be more thoroughly developed to address the areas of concern raised by the committee. Your Gold Award Committee mentor and Joan Hannahoe should be consulted for suggestions on how to further develop this project, and will then give final approval to begin the project.

Denied – Canned projects, such as blood drives, collection projects, or projects to raise money for another organization will be given this designation. Projects are rarely denied outright: most projects can be restructured to meet standards. Consult with your Gold Award Committee mentor for clarification or suggestions. Your next proposal will go through the committee.

4. Submit a Gold Award Take Action Final Report, final timeline, final budget, list of volunteers, Public Relations Form, project binder, digital headshot of yourself, and 3 digital project photos with you in one photo and your volunteers in another photo.
 5. Schedule a Final Presentation with the Gold Award Committee. If you want to be recognized at the spring ceremony, the **deadline to conduct your final presentation with the Gold Award Committee is January 31.**
- Bring your Gold Award binder to your Final Presentation.
 - Celebrate a job well done! CONGRATULATIONS!

Gold Award Take Action Project Hours and Binder Guidelines

Project activities/tasks which DO count toward the 80 project hours:

- Time spent on the Gold Award Take Action Toolkit, up to a maximum of 15 hours.
- Work done on your project after it has been approved by the Gold Award Committee includes:
 - Communicating with others
 - Research and planning
 - Recruiting, training and supervising your Volunteer Team to help
 - Buying and gathering supplies
 - Implementing the project
 - Evaluating the project

Project activities/tasks which DO NOT count toward the 80 project hours:

- Time spent completing the Journey Book(s)
- Attending Gold Award Take Action training
- Filling out the Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal and Final Report
- Putting together your Gold Award project binder, scrapbook or display

- If you receive service unit approval to conduct a money-earning project (in order to fund your project), the only hours that will count will be for research, development and planning, but not the actual implementation of the money-earning project.
- Time given by the people helping you

Required items for your 3-ring Gold Award Take Action Project Binder:

- Your name and project name on the cover
- Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal
- Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Final Report
- Final timeline must include each project task, the month/date/year completed, and the time spent on each task. Total the timeline hours to record how you earned the minimum 80 project hours.
- Final Budget which includes a list of all project supplies, the quantity and cost per supply. Tell us who funded or donated each of project supplies.
- A list of your volunteers, the hours and dates they assisted you, and their title/position (i.e. teacher, coach, Girl Scout leader, friend, relative, etc.)
- Documentation pertaining to the project such as flyers, event schedule, receipts, etc.
- Photographs that tell the story of your progress. Include “action” shots of people helping you, as well as photos of your involvement.
- Participant, Volunteer Team and Project Advisor evaluation forms
- Copies of any media recognition your project received
- Any letters of recognition and appreciation you may have received
- Any written or email correspondence
- **You must include separate copies of the following required final paperwork for the Older Girl Program Manager: Final Report, timeline and budget, volunteer list, Public Relations form, digital headshot of your self, and three digital project photos with you in one photo and volunteers in one of the photos.**

Celebrate a job well done! CONGRATULATIONS!

The GSEP Achievement Ceremony recognizes our newest Gold Award Girl Scouts. The event is held each year in May or June to recognize those girls who earned their award during the 12 months from February to January. Every Gold Award Girl Scout who conducted her final presentation by January 31st is recognized at this event.

Young Women of Distinction is the designation given by GSUSA to the top ten Gold Award Girl Scouts in the country each year. The council Gold Award Committee reviews all of the Gold Award Take Action projects submitted during the specified time and selects projects to forward to GSUSA. Young Women of Distinction are recognized at a ceremony held in Washington, D.C. or at the GSUSA National Council Session/Convention.

Gold Award Alliance - Upon completion of the Girl Scout Gold Award, a girl becomes a member of the Gold Award Alliance, a sisterhood of all past recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award or prior similar awards. As a Gold Award Girl Scout you are also eligible to become a member of the **Gold Award Committee**.

From Good to Great: Successful Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects

Troop Advisors and Girl Scouts are always wondering what types of projects are suitable for the Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Project. It is impossible to come up with an absolute list because a project should be based on the individual skills, abilities and interests of the girl. However, some basic guidelines are that the project should:

- Be challenging to the Girl Scout
- Make a contribution to the community
- Be specific to the individual interest
- It is important to differentiate between a community service project and a Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Project.
- The Gold Award Take Action Project should involve planning and individual opportunities for leadership and decision-making.

Here are several activities that start as good service projects, but with good planning have moved into the caliber of a Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Project.

Good Service Project	GREAT Girl Scout Gold Award Project!
Volunteering many hours at a Park Service site picking up litter.	Reseeding an area with native vegetation and ridding area of non-native vegetation. Creating an interpretive guide on what the area was like 50 years ago and why it is important to preserve native species.
Working at the local library doing children’s story hours or conducting a book drive for the juvenile detention center.	Creating a reading program for a migrant work camp in the summer. Assuring that each child receives a book (bilingual) of their own. Matching young children with volunteer tutors from the high school Spanish club to create an ongoing service project.
Volunteering to collect games and food at the mall for a teen center.	Creating a health access booklet for teens in the community; culminating with a teen health fair with various organizations presenting their services. Admission is canned goods for a teen center.
Planting flowers in a park during a community service day.	Working with the city parks department to start a public gardening project in your community. Providing food to a food bank from the garden. Using a greenhouse at a school to start plants yearly with kids and retired folks as mentors.
Acting in a play to commemorate the 100th anniversary of a community.	Researching and writing a script for a cemetery tour focusing on the founders of the community. Casting parts, creating costumes and arranging for a series of evening cemetery tours to kick off the founding of the community.

Gold Award Take Action Project Planning Check List

✓	Activity	Date Completed (Month/day/year)
	Complete Journey requirements	
	Attend Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Training and/or Download and read the Gold Award Take Action Manual from GSUSA's web site and the GSEP Gold Award Resource Manual.	
	Read the Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Tool Kit	
	Work on a timeline for your Gold Award Take Action Project and the requirements and discuss with your Troop Leader.	
	Select a Gold Award Take Action Project Advisor and recruit a Volunteer Team.	
	Fill out the Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal.	
	Submit Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal to GSEP by the deadline dates listed in the booklet to ensure review at the meeting of your choice. (see page 10)	
	Once approved, start working on your Gold Award Take Action Project. Keep a detailed timeline/log of your hours.	
	Stay in contact with your Gold Award Project Advisor and Gold Award Committee Mentor throughout your project. Inform her/him of any changes or problems with your project.	
	Once the project is completed, submit the Gold Award Take Action Project Final Report, final timeline and budget, list of volunteers, public relations form, digital headshot and three digital project photos (you in one photo and volunteers in one photo).	
	Schedule and conduct a Final Presentation with the Gold Award Committee.	
	Final Approval: Once you have received final approval from your Gold Award Committee, you will receive a letter of congratulations from GSEP which includes a tentative date for the council's spring Achievement Ceremony.	

Sample Gold Award Take Action Project Timeline

This is just a sample of the project tasks for the issue listed below. Each of the project tasks, estimated dates and hours need to be recorded on the Sample Gold Award Take Action Timeline .

Issue

I live near a large apartment complex with limited space for children to play and little for them to do during the summer months.

Project

To plan and carry out an eight week series of reading, craft and game workshops in the community room at the complex. Prepare a manual for the complex so the program can be duplicated in future years.

Steps to take in putting my plan into action, prior to seeking approval from the Gold Award Committee:

Pre-approval

Estimated Dates	Project Activity/Description	Estimated Hours
3/30/10	Contact the person in charge of apartment complex and schedule a meeting	15 min
4/2/10	Meet with complex manager to present program idea	1 hr
4/5/10	Talk to children in complex about proposed summer program	2 hrs
4/6/10	Talk to the parents about the summer program	2 hrs
4/7/10	Create preliminary plan for activities and estimate project expenses	4 hrs
4/7/10	Talk to friends who might want to help me at program	2 hrs
4/9/10	Visit apartment complex to decide how to get approval to use community room for program	1 hr
	Total Pre-approval hours	12 hr 15 min

You may count up to a maximum of 15 hours of planning and research completed in Steps 2–4, prior to council approval toward the 80 project hours. Please calculate all time in 5 minute increments and hours. Do not use fractions.

Remember: Submit project proposal at least 4 weeks prior to when you want to get started on the project. Please note that time spent completing the Project Proposal form does not count toward the 80 hours.

Steps to take after getting approval from the Gold Award Committee to proceed:

Post-approval

Estimated Dates	Project Activity/Description	Estimated Hours
5/15/10	Prepare announcement for complex newsletter with program dates and times	2 hr
5/16/10	Deliver program info to complex manager	1 hr
5/17/10	Design and hang colorful posters to attract children	4 hrs
5/18-19/10	Research ideas for workshops	6 hrs
5/20/10	Try out possible crafts	4 hrs
5/21/10	Set up workshop schedule	3 hrs
5/24/10	Recruit volunteers	2 hrs
5/27-28/10	Prepare materials for workshops	10 hrs (1 hr/workshop x 10 workshops)
6/1/10	Shop for workshop supplies	3 hrs
6/4/10	Train my Volunteer Team	3 hrs
6/20-23 and 6/27-30/10	Conduct workshops	20 hrs (2 hrs/workshops x 10 workshops)
6/20 - 23 and 6/27-30/10	Set up and Clean up for 10 workshops	10 hrs (1 hr per workshop)
6/25/10	Make certificates for participants	3 hrs
7/6/10	Write thank you notes to Volunteer Team	2 hrs
7/7/10	Prepare a program manual for the complex for future use	4 hrs
	Total Estimated Hours (Total of pre and post-approval hours)	89 hrs 15 min

Sample Gold Award Take Action Project Budget

The following example of a budget is from an imaginary Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Project. While your needs will be different, this will guide you in developing a workable budget for your project.

Church basement renovation budget

Materials	Estimated Cost (\$)	Purchased/Donated
4 gallons paint (\$26/gallon)	104	Church donation
Paint brushes (4 @ \$7 each)	28	Home Depot donation*
Drop cloths (4 @ \$6 each)	24	Home Depot donation*
Rollers (4 @ \$4 each)	16	My donation
Paint trays	Free	Personal supply
Spackle	10	My donation
Curtains (5 yds. fabric @ \$6/yd)	30	My donation
Total budget for project	\$212	

* If I don't receive donations from businesses, I will pay the remaining expenses.

Quotes from Gold Award Recipients

The following quotes are from GSEP Girl Scouts who earned the Girl Scout Gold Award.

“I have gained the confidence that is needed to lead successful projects. I learned to be flexible, even on short-notice, because things rarely go as planned.”

“By gaining confidence in myself, I became a leader and learned ways to give back to the community.”

“I have had multiple opportunities to learn leadership skills, a chance to meet other Girl Scouts from all over the country, and a chance to serve my fellow Girls Scouts.”

“I have also learned how to establish life-long friendships even though life may take us in different directions.”

“I am now confident in myself to execute tasks within a set time period and communicate effectively and efficiently with adults.”

“I have gained a love for service and giving back to my community.”

“I gained leadership while learning to be more aware of the world around me.”

“I have learned how to lead a group, better manage my time, and to be more confident in my ability to achieve a goal.”

“Girl Scouts has shown me that being unique and different is a good thing.”

Procedure to Request Letters of Solicitation for Materials/Supplies

A girl cannot create her own solicitation letter and send it to a business without approval from the council. She must follow the guidelines listed below.

1. Contact Joan Hannahoe at jhannahoe@gsep.org and ask her to send you the e-file for the council’s Solicitation of Materials/Supplies letter (as shown on the following page).
2. When you receive the file containing the letter, fill in all of the blanks. You must use a separate letter for each business you wish to solicit.
3. Email the letter(s) to Joan Hannahoe. Allow one week to process the letters.
4. After Mrs. Hannahoe proofs the letter, adds her signature and inserts the council letterhead, she will mail the original letter to you, plus a copy for your award binder.
5. When you receive the letter(s) in the mail, add your signature and then deliver/mail to the business.

Date **(January 1, 2010 - NOT 1/1/10)**

Store Manager's name

Name of Business

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Sir:

My name is _____ I am in ____ grade at _____
_____ and a Girl Scout in Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania Troop # _____.

I am presently working on my Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn. For my
Gold Award project, I am _____
which will benefit _____. In order to complete this project, I
will need some materials. Perhaps you can help. The list of items that I need includes: _____
_____.

I greatly appreciate any assistance you can provide to help make my project a success.
Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania is a 501 © (3) non-profit organization. If you have any
questions you may contact me at _____
or Joan Hannahoe, GSEP Program Manager at 610.791.2411, ext. 1509. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your name

Your full address

City, State, Zip Code

Joan L. Hannahoe

GSEP Program Manager

Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Project Proposal

Please fill out this form using a word processing program, type or print in black ink. Proposals which are incomplete or written in pencil will be returned. Make copies for your Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor, your Troop Leader and for you to keep.

Submit the original Gold Award Project Proposal at least four weeks prior to when you want to start your project to Joan Hannahoe at: Lehigh Valley Service Center, 2633 Moravian Avenue, Allentown, PA 18103 OR to jhannahoe@gsep.org. Do not begin your project until you have received Council approval, and you have a signed agreement letter detailing any changes to this form. **A relative's signature may not appear anywhere on this form.**

FOR COUNCIL USE ONLY

Received by Council on: _____ Reviewed by committee on: _____

Project Agreement signed on: _____

Name: _____ Service Unit: _____

Address: _____ County: _____

City: _____ State: _____ 9-digit Zip Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____ High School Graduation Year: _____

School: _____

Troop/Group Leader's Name: _____ Troop/Group #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Troop/Group Leaders Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Project Advisor's Organization: _____

Project Advisor's Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Prerequisites

Earn two Senior or Ambassador Journeys OR one Journey and the Girl Scout Silver Award.

List the Journey(s) that you have completed along with your troop/group leader's signature.

Senior/Ambassador Journey Books	Date Completed	Troop/Group Volunteer's Signature
1.		
2.		

Please answer the questions listed below which are relative to the Journey book(s) you earned.

Girl Scout Senior Journeys

It's Your World – Change It! Girltopia

1. What unique vision and artistic representation did you create and share for Create It?
2. What mini-discussion or group activity did you lead for Guide It?
3. Describe your take action project that moved the world or your community closer to ideal for Change It.

It's Your Planet – Love It! Sow What

1. What food or land issue were you able to identify for your leader print?
2. What goal did you create that would benefit both the planet and the people?
3. How did you create change by influencing a food policy or land-use effort?

It's Your Story – Tell! Mission: Sisterhood

1. What did you discover that you value most about friendship?
2. What sisterhood issue did you define that you could take action on and what did you do?
3. How will you carry the message of leadership for sisterhood forward?

Girl Scout Ambassador Journeys

It's Your World – Change It! Your Voice, Your World

1. What was the cause you researched that you want to advocate?
2. What was the workable and realistic solution that you proposed?
3. What did you learn by advocating for your chosen issue?

It's Your Planet – Love It! Justice

1. What did you find that matters the most to you about the environment?
2. What was your equation for achieving justice?
3. Who was included in your audience when you made your Sage presentation and what did you ask them to do?

It's Your Story – Tell It! - Bliss: Live It! Give It!

1. Who were the three women you interviewed for Step 1 of the Dream Maker Award and what dream is each one living or working toward?
2. Who did you help to recognize her dream and how did you help her move it forward?
3. What is your own dream for the future?

Girl Scout Bronze Award

Girl Scout Bronze Award Completion Date (month/year).

Describe your Bronze Award Project.

Girl Scout Silver Award

Girl Scout Silver Award Completion Date (month/year).

Describe your Silver Award Project.

Gold Award Take Action Project

Project Title: _____

Proposed Start Date: _____ Proposed Completion Date: _____

List the full name and address of the sites/organizations (beneficiary) which will benefit from your project. If you plan to provide the program to more than one site, attach a sheet with additional agency names and addresses.

Name of Project Beneficiary: _____

Beneficiary's Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

A. Describe the issue your project will address. Remember your 15-second pitch. Then answer the following questions.

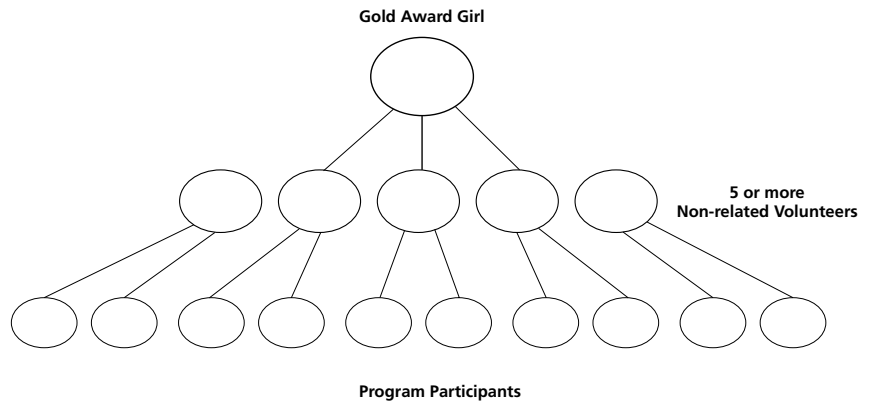
1. Who will benefit from the project? Who is your audience? How many people will be served (if applicable)?
2. What type of program/service will you provide? What do you hope to achieve? Describe in detail.
3. When will the program or service be provided? Give estimated dates.
4. Where will the program or service be provided? If same as above, indicate as "Same". If there is more than one site, list all.

B. Discuss your reasons for selecting this project.

C. Outline the strengths, talents, and skills that you plan to put into action. What skills do you hope to develop?

D. Describe the steps involved in putting your plan into action, including resources, facilities, equipment, and approvals needed. **Complete Gold Award Take Action Project Timeline included in this resource manual.** Please estimate the time for each project task/activity. **You must include the 10 leadership hours needed to recruit, train and supervise your team of volunteers. Then total the estimated hours to show how you plan to earn the minimum 80 project hours.**

E. Describe how you will accomplish the leadership component of the Gold Award Project. Tell us how you will recruit, train and supervise five or more volunteers (other than family members) to assist you with this project. You must build at least 10 hours of leadership into your project where you lead your volunteer team who help you deliver/provide the program/service to others. In addition, please list your volunteers in the chart below:



F. Resource Team - List the names of individuals, organizations or businesses that you plan to work with on your Take Action project. This is a preliminary list that may grow through the course of your project.

Name	Title of Organization	Technical Knowledge/Role in your project

G. Volunteer Team - List the names of the volunteers you plan to use to complete your project. Include full names, titles and organizations, if applicable. Also list their relationship to you, if applicable (i.e. parent, sibling, Girl Scout leader, teacher, friend, coach, etc.)

Name	Relationship to you	Describe how they will assist you

H. Budget—Estimate overall project expenses and how you plan to meet these costs. All supplies needed to complete the project must be listed. Indicate if you plan to have any supplies donated. Contact the Older Girl Program Manager for the GSEP Letter of Solicitation of Materials/Supplies to seek supplies from businesses. This section must be completed by every applicant, even if the beneficiary covers the project expenses or if you don't need to purchase supplies.

Materials description	Cost	Donated/Paid by

I. How will your project be sustained beyond your involvement? See toolkit for sustainability tips in GSUSA Gold Award Manual.

J. Indicate methods and/or tools you will utilize to evaluate the effectiveness of your project. You must create and distribute evaluation forms to all volunteers, participants and project advisors. All evaluations must be included in your project binder.

K. Describe how you plan to tell others about your project, the project’s impact, and what you have learned (Web site, blog, presentations, posters, videos, articles, and so on).

Impact On ...	Goals	Examples of Immediate Impact	Possible Future Impact
Community	What community issue will be addressed?	What are concrete examples of ways you plan to make a difference?	What examples of the project impact might you see in the future?
Target Audience (workshop participants, other youth, community members, and so on)	What skills, knowledge, or attitudes will your target audience gain?	What examples demonstrate ways that the target audience will gain skills or knowledge?	What would be examples of a long-term impact on your target audience?

L. The following is a list of the 15 Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes.

Which outcomes do you think you will develop throughout this project process?

Discover:

- I will develop a stronger sense of self.
- I will develop positive values.
- I will gain practical life skills.
- I will seek challenges in the world.
- I will develop critical thinking.

Connect:

- I will develop healthy relationships.
- I will promote cooperation and team building.
- I will resolve conflicts.
- I will advance diversity in a multicultural world.
- I will feel more connected to my community, locally and globally.

Take Action:

- I will identify community issues.
- I will be a resourceful problem solver.
- I will advocate for myself and others, locally and globally.
- I will educate and inspire others to act.
- I will feel empowered to make a difference in the world.

Your Signature: _____ Date: _____

Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Project Advisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE:

Your Project Advisor must be the contact person from the agency which will benefit from the project or an adult with expertise related to your project. The project advisor cannot be your troop leader or a relative.

Applicant's racial background is: (please check as many as apply)

- African American American Indian Asian Caucasian
 Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Other (please specify: _____)

Applicant's ethnic background is: (please check one)

- Hispanic or Latina Non-Hispanic or Latina

Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Final Report

Please fill out this form using a word processing program, type or print in black ink. Reports which are incomplete or written in pencil will be returned. **Make copies of the following for the Older Girl Program Manager: Final Report, final timeline and budget, and list of volunteers, their role, and the dates and hours they served.**

FOR COUNCIL USE ONLY

Received by Council on: _____ Reviewed by committee on: _____

Name: _____ Service Unit: _____

Address: _____ County: _____

City: _____ State: _____ 9-digit Zip Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____ High School Graduation Year: _____

School: _____

Troop/Group Leader's Name: _____ Troop/Group #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Troop/Group Leaders Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Project Advisor's Organization: _____

Project Advisor's Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Gold Award Take Action Project

Project Title: _____

Actual Start Date: _____ Actual Completion Date: _____

List the full name and address of the sites/organizations (beneficiary) which will benefit from your project. If you plan to provide the program to more than one site, attach a sheet with additional agency names and addresses.

Name of Project Beneficiary: _____

Beneficiary's Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

You may use a separate sheet of paper to answer the following questions.

A. Describe the issue your project addressed.

- a. Who benefited from the project? Who was your audience? How many people were served (if applicable)?
- b. What skills, knowledge, or attitudes did your target audience gain?
- c. What type of program/service did you provide? What did you achieve? Describe in detail.
- d. When was the program/service offered? Give actual dates (if applicable)
- e. Where was the program /service offered? If same as above, indicate as "Same". If there was more than one site, list all.
- f. Please describe the method for the program/service delivery.

B. Explain how you achieved the ten hours of leadership with your Volunteer Team and other community participants. How did you train and supervise your Volunteer Team?

C. Attach a final timeline of the 80 project hours.

D. Write a brief summary of evaluation forms you received from your Volunteer Team and community participants.

E. What did you learn about yourself as a result of this project?

F. What aspects of your project would you change or do differently?

G. What was the most successful part of your project?

H. List the names of consultants and resources who helped you complete your project. Include full names, titles and organizations, if applicable. Also list their relationship to you, if applicable (i.e. parent, sibling, Girl Scout leader, teacher, friend, coach, etc.)

Name	Relationship to you	Describe how they will assist you

I. Final Budget–Report the final project expenses and income and indicate how the project was funded. This section must be completed by every applicant, even if the beneficiary covers the project expenses or you don't need to purchase supplies.

Materials description	Cost	Donated/Paid by
Total Expenses	\$	
Total Income	\$	

J. How was your project sustained ? What examples of the project impact might you see in the future?

K. Explain the global connection to your project.

L. Describe how you told others about your project, the project's impact, and what you have learned (Web site, blog, presentations, posters, videos, articles, and so on).

M. The following is a list of the 15 Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes.

Which outcomes did you develop throughout this project process?

Discover:

- I developed a stronger sense of self.
- I developed positive values.
- I gained practical life skills.
- I sought challenges in the world.
- I will develop critical thinking.

Connect:

- I developed healthy relationships.
- I promoted cooperation and team building.
- I resolved conflicts.
- I advanced diversity in a multicultural world.
- I felt more connected to my community, locally and globally.

Take Action:

- I identified community issues.
- I was a resourceful problem solver.
- I advocated for myself and others, locally and globally.
- I educated and inspired others to act.
- I felt empowered to make a difference in the world.

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Leader’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

Project Advisor’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE:

Your Project Advisor must be an adult with expertise related to your project and cannot be your troop leader or relative.

Applicant’s racial background is: (please check as many as apply)

African American American Indian Asian Caucasian

Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Other (please specify: _____)

Applicant’s ethnic background is: (please check one)

Hispanic or Latina Non-Hispanic or Latina



Regional Headquarters

Shelly Ridge Service Center
330 Manor Road
Miquon, PA 19444

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 27540
Philadelphia, PA 19118

888/215.564.4657
Fax 215.564.6953